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The Honorable Sen. Dennis Kruse
Indiana State Senator, District 14
200 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN, 46204

Dear Senator Kruse,

We write to you today as concerned representatives of the Center for Inquiry (CFI), a nonprofit organization that advocates for science, reason, and secular values through research, publishing, advocacy, and community outreach. CFI carries out its work in several places across the United States, including Indiana. CFI-Indianapolis, located at 350 Canal Walk on the Indiana Central Canal, draws thousands of Indiana residents to its events each year, many of whom are active in state politics.

The reason for our concern is Indiana Senate Bill 89, which was sponsored by you and is currently before the Committee on Education and Career Development. The text of SB 89 reads that:

“The governing body of a school corporation may require the teaching of various theories concerning the origin of life, including creation science, within the school corporation.”

We respectfully request that you withdraw SB 89 from consideration. Here’s why.

SB 89 would allow school boards and other authorized educational administrators in Indiana to require that religious belief be taught in public school classrooms as valid and true. This would violate both the spirit and letter of the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution, which states, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.” In other words, the U.S. government and its agencies should remain neutral on the matter of religion. It should not favor one religion over another, nor should it favor religion over nonreligion.

SB 89 would also blatantly contradict the Supreme Court’s ruling in the 1987 case *Edwards v. Aguillard* that teaching creationism as science in public schools is unconstitutional.

The Supreme Court ruled as it did not because the justices necessarily disagreed with creationism. The Supreme Court’s decision was based on the simple fact that so-called “creation science” is not science. It is a religious view, and more specifically, a Christian view. Broadly speaking, science is a process that requires its participants to make claims based on, and testable by, empirical evidence. In comparison, creationism is a specific religious belief that requires a leap of faith either in conflict with, or at least unsupported by, existing scientific evidence. If and when origins of life theories are taught in public schools,

The mission of the Center for Inquiry is to foster a secular society based on science, reason, freedom of inquiry, and humanist values.

discussions should be based on objective scientific research and evidence, not subjective religious belief. Anything less would leave the door wide open to countless mythological and religious stories of origins.

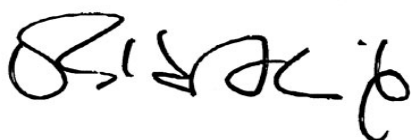
Even if SB 89 were approved and signed by Gov. Mitch Daniels, it would undoubtedly face a doomed yet costly court battle. The price tag of this clash would fall on the shoulders of Indiana taxpayers. Are you prepared to hand Indiana residents a substantial legal bill that might hinder funding for public education or other public goods? Or that might cause a raise in taxes? Do you think taxpayers will approve of spending potentially hundreds of thousands of their dollars in an ill-advised attempt to inject Christianity into public school classrooms?

America's robust respect for freedom of speech and belief allows for the religious to promote their beliefs and values in homes, churches, and the public square. But, in accordance with both the Establishment Clause and *Edwards v. Aguillard*, taxpayer-funded public schools should remain neutral on matters of religion, and refrain from teaching creationism and other religious views.

In light of these arguments, we respectfully ask that you withdraw Indiana Senate Bill 89.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

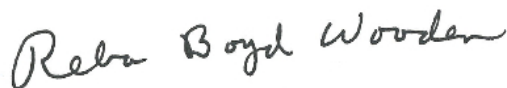
Sincerely,



Ron Lindsay
President and CEO, Center for Inquiry



Michael De Dora
Director, CFI-Office of Public Policy



Reba Boyd Wooden
Executive Director, CFI-Indiana